

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 12

May 1, 2007

**SUBJECT: SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIVE
CHECKLIST FIELD NOTEBOOK DIVIDER, FORM 18.46.00 -
ACTIVATED**

PURPOSE: During 2005, the Department received approximately 12,000 Suspected Child Abuse Reports (SCAR) from various mandated reporters. In an effort to provide more timely and effective investigations, Juvenile Division developed the Suspected Child Abuse Preliminary Investigative Checklist Field Notebook Divider, Form 18.46.00. The form is intended to assist and guide officers in fulfilling their responsibilities to conduct accurate and thorough SCAR investigations. It also includes guidelines regarding medical treatment and obtaining evidence during preliminary investigations. This Order activates the Suspected Child Abuse Preliminary Investigative Checklist Field Notebook Divider, Form 18.46.00.

**PROCEDURE: SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIVE
CHECKLIST FIELD NOTEBOOK DIVIDER, FORM 18.46.00 -
ACTIVATED.** The Suspected Child Abuse Preliminary Investigative Checklist Field Notebook Divider, Form 18.46.00, is to be used as a reference document only, to assist and guide officers in conducting accurate and thorough SCAR investigations. This checklist is **NOT** a required attachment to Department reports.

FORM AVAILABILITY: The Suspected Child Abuse Preliminary Investigative Checklist Field Notebook Divider, Form 18.46.00, will be available on the Department's Local Area Network System. A copy of the form is attached for immediate use.

AMENDMENTS: This Order adds Department Manual Section 5/18.46.00.

WILLIAM J. BRATTON
Chief of Police

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION "A"

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIVE CHECKLIST

ARRIVAL AT SCENE

- ☐ Determine if the child is in imminent danger due to physical or sexual abuse.
- ☐ Determine if the child is in need of medical treatment.
- ☐ Determine if the suspect is still at the location.
- ☐ When you respond to a radio or station call, "Meet the Social Worker" or "Keep the Peace," determine if the call requires a police investigation.

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

- ☐ Identify and separately interview the victim, all witnesses (including the person reporting, medical personnel) and suspect.
- ☐ Determine the number, identity and location of other siblings and examine each thoroughly for physical abuse.
- ☐ Write down statements verbatim.
- ☐ Ask the victim how they are normally disciplined.
- ☐ Document any visible injuries that the victim has sustained (be descriptive), including any other visible marks/scars from past incidents.
- ☐ Ask the victim and witness about prior history of abuse.
- ☐ Document the victim's emotional condition.
- ☐ Determine what crime was committed and who committed it. Answer the who, what, when, where, how and why questions of the investigation.
- ☐ When there is no evidence of a crime, an Injury Report shall be completed in all cases to document the preliminary investigation.

Note: According to Department Manual Section 4/218.52, cases of juveniles as victims of possible sexual molestation, or physical or mental abuse, **shall be reported on an Injury Report, Form 03.15.00**, where the circumstances do not appear to warrant completion of a crime report.

Example: A non-verbal victim has redness to her vaginal area, the parent suspects sexual abuse due to the redness and takes the child to the doctor. The doctor recommends a specialist to examine the victim since the redness could have been caused by poor hygiene. Until more information is uncovered to determine otherwise, an **Injury Report shall** be completed.

- ☐ An **Investigative Report** should be completed when a victim discloses that he/she was physically abused and/or sexually molested.
- ☐ An officer shall take a child into protective custody when the officer determines that the victim will be in substantial risk if he/she were to remain in the home.
- ☐ Utilize Department computer resources to determine whether there have been prior reports on victim (NECS/DCTS/CC10 or CC08) and criminal history inquiry on possible suspects.
- ☐ Contact the Investigative Control Unit (ICU), Juvenile Division, for advice during business hours at (213) 485-6392 or (213) 485-6421 between 0600 to 1800 hours.
- ☐ Contact Detective Support and Vice Division for advice during off hours at (213) 485-2505 between 1800 to 0600 hours and on weekends.
- ☐ An Investigative Report must be prepared in all cases when a juvenile is booked for 300 WIC with the **exception** of

300(b), (f), (g), or (h) non-criminal situations where Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has assumed investigative responsibility.

- ☐ An Arrest Report and a booking number is required for each victim taken into custody for 300 WIC with the **exception** of 300(b), (f), (g), or (h) non-criminal situations where DCFS has assumed investigative responsibility.
- ☐ A separate DR number is required for each victim of physical and/or sexual abuse. Any additional endangered siblings share one DR number.

Note: Under no circumstances should an officer write in the narrative of the report, "Officer determined that no crime occurred." This is an opinion and not a fact.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

- ☐ Visually check the victim's injuries.
Exception: Victims of sexual assault shall be transported to an appropriate contract hospital for medical care and the collection of related medical evidence as soon as possible after the crime, as per Department Manual Section 4/210.35.

Note: According to Juvenile Manual Section 307.20, an officer of either sex may examine a juvenile who is **three** years of age or younger. When the juvenile is **four** years of age or older, the examination shall be performed by an officer of the juvenile's sex or by medical personnel.

- ☐ Ascertain the nature and extent of the injuries.
- ☐ Transport victim to the hospital for medical treatment, if necessary.
- ☐ Obtain a statement from the attending physician.
- ☐ Obtain a copy of the medical treatment report and attach it to related police report(s).

EVIDENCE

- ☐ Obtain SID photographs of victim's injuries and scars from prior injuries. **Polaroid or digital photographs shall not be taken.**
- ☐ DR number must be obtained prior to requesting photos.
- ☐ If necessary, obtain crime scene photographs.
- ☐ Book all evidence.

CROSS REPORT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS) HOTLINE

- ☐ Contact DCFS at **(800) 540-4000**.
- ☐ When a victim is taken into custody, release the victim to DCFS for placement.

ARREST AND REPORTS

- ☐ If the suspect is arrested contact the appropriate investigative detective for advice.
- ☐ If the perpetrator is the parent, guardian, or primary caretaker, write on the side of the Injury Report or the Investigative Report, **"SEND TO JUVENILE DIVISION."**